GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:5200
ANSWERED ON:30.04.2008
INDIAN CITIZENS WORKING ABROAD
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Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Indian citizens working in foreign countries, country-wise;

(b) whether there is any mechanism for monitoring their working conditions; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS(SHRI VAYALAR RAVI)

(a): Under the Emigration Act, 1983, the offices of Protectors of Emigrants (POEs), under the administrative control of this Ministry grant emigration clearance to Indian emigrant workers in the emigration check required (ECR) category proceeding for employment in 17 ECR Countries. The details of such emigration clearance granted during the last three years are at Annexure-I. About ninety percent of Indians working abroad are in the Gulf countries. Details of total number of workers in gulf countries are at Annexure-II.

(b)&(c): As per reports received in the Indian Missions and this Ministry, the main problems faced by the Indian emigrants in foreign counties particularly Gulf countries and Malaysia etc. are related to the following:

non-payment/reduced/delayed payment of salaries

non deployment on promised jobs

adverse working conditions

denial of appropriate medical facilities

poor living conditions, etc.

To monitor the working conditions of the Indian workers and their protection and welfare, the following steps are taken:

(i) On receipt of complaints against registered recruiting agents action is taken by the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs under the provision of Emigration Act, 1983, leading to suspension and cancellation of their registration certificate / license in serious cases.

(ii) In respect of unregistered recruiting agents, the complaints are referred to concerned State/Governments/Police Authorities / Protectors of Emigrants for investigation and action for violation of Section 10 of Emigration Act 1983 and other provisions of the law as appropriate.

(iii) In respect of complaint against the foreign employer(FE), FE is placed in the Prior Approval Category (Black list) and as a consequence is not allowed to recruit workers from India.

(iv) In case the stay of the Indian emigrant worker is declared illegal on account of various reasons, the Indian Missions take up the matter with the local authorities for either regularising their stay or their safe deportation back to India.

(v) In case deportation is required, this Ministry coordinates with the local Government through Indian Missions, the State government authorities, Ministries of Home Affairs and External Affairs for ensuring their safe passage back to India.

(vi) Further, in order to ensure the protection and welfare of Indian workers by the host countries, Government of India has entered into bilateral labour MoUs with UAE in December 2006, and with Kuwait in April 2007. An additional protocol with Qatar was signed in November 2007 to update the 1985 Agreement with that country. MoU with Malaysia has been finalised. Such MoUs with Bahrain, Oman and Yemen are underway. These MoUs and Agreements provide for a broad framework for cooperation in Labour and Employment and also provide for Joint Working Groups of senior officers from both sides as an effective grievance redressal mechanism for better protection and welfare of Overseas Indian workers.

(vii) Wide publicity campaigns, both in electronic and print media, have been taken up by this Ministry for educating the workers on the

emigration procedures.